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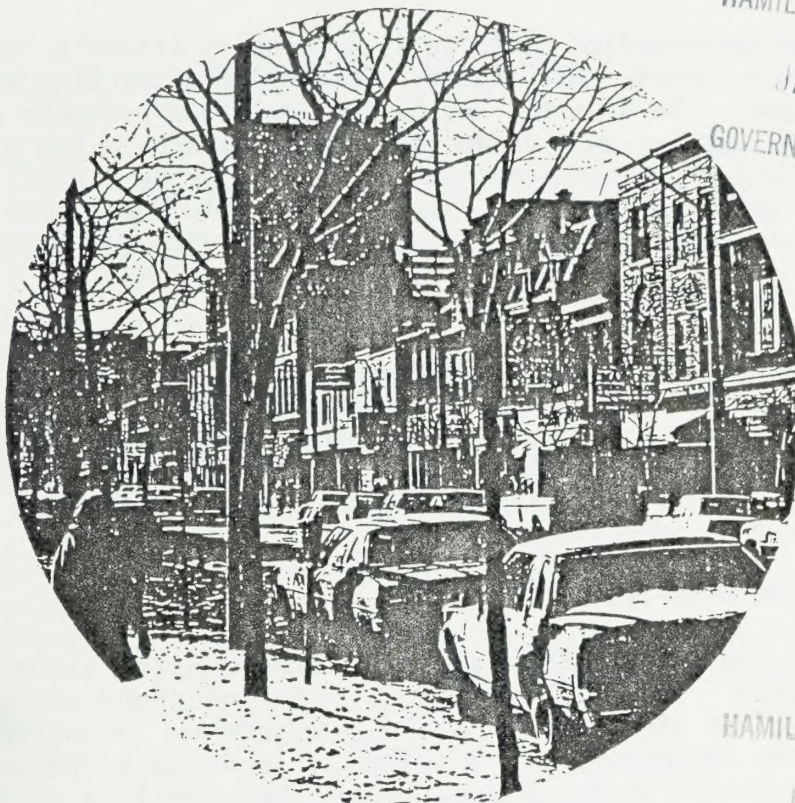
James Street North
Hamilton - a heritage
conservation district plan
- summary

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James Street North

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A HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PLAN

Prepared by
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London

summary

WHAT IS A HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT?

A heritage conservation district is a group of historic buildings usually on a street, that together make up an attractive part of a city or town. The district may be in a downtown business area, a residential area or even in an old industrial area. The district also may include natural environment areas such as a river, a mill pond or a park. Above all else a district has a special and distinct character that makes it worth preserving and enhancing.

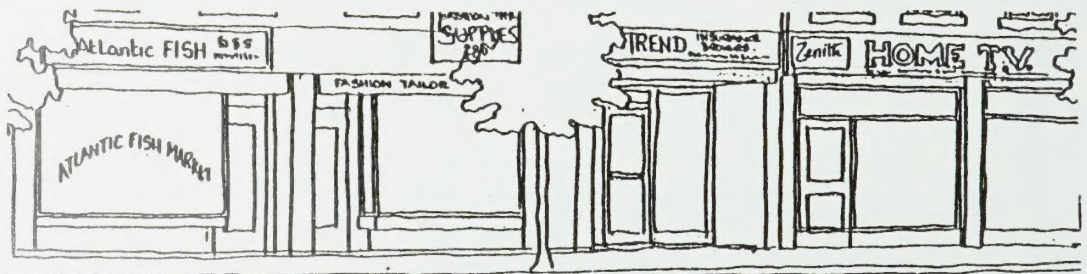
WHY JAMES STREET NORTH?

James Street North has been selected for a heritage conservation study because it is a superb historic district with a distinct and special character. It is one of the few remaining grand historic streetscapes in the city of Hamilton. The district also has a long established business and residential community with a strong sense of identity.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PLAN?

Attractive and functional business and residential areas do not simply happen. They must be carefully designed and managed. A plan that gives direction and focus is essential. A heritage plan provides the opportunity for a community to discuss the problems and opportunities of the district, and what should be achieved. Many issues are discussed including car parking, street lighting, landscaping and upgrading the building stock. A most important benefit of the plan is that a clear vision is established for the district. The plan provides a focus and reference point to which public and private activity can relate. The district evolves now by design rather than accident.

This is the first time a plan has been prepared particularly for James Street North by and with the community.



WHO PREPARES THE PLAN?

Many people and groups are involved in the preparation of the plan. A key group has been the James Street North Advisory Committee. This committee is made up of local and interested people and through many meetings has made a significant contribution to the shape and content of the plan. The committee includes:

Agostino Ammendolia	Real Estate Broker
Ron Boyko	Mike's Dry Cleaners
Pascal & Yola Brandino	Patsy's Ringside Restaurant
Robert Brough	L.A.C A.C.
Tino Cironi	Tino's Hair Design
Ron Corsini	Corsini's Supermarket
Gene Gnyp	Landscape Architect
Brian Henley	L.A.C A.C.
Walt Ireson	Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police Department - Representing the Armories
Fern Juliao	Mingles Cafe
Bryce Kanbara	Hamilton Artists Inc.
Sid Leon (Chairman)	Irving's Famous Clothes
Ginette Morgan	J & J Hardware
Kay Nolan	Central Area Plan Implementation Committee
James Rehor	Orillia Dress Shop
Mary Robbins	McKay Florists
Guy Ricca	Factory Furniture Mart
Guido Ricca	Factory Furniture Mart
Peter Rozakis	Deno's Deli & Burgers
Jerry Sherman	Jerry's Men's Shop
Gil Simmons	L.A.C A.C.
Doris Skorpion	Resident
Paul Somers	Eco Repro Graphic Inc.

The architect planner hired by the city to prepare and write the plan is Nicholas Hill. The city planning staff members assigned to co-ordinate the plans are David Godley and Rosemary Campbell. The conservation officer from the provincial government which is co-funding the plan is David Cuming. Nina Chapple is an advisor from the local architectural conservation advisory committee.



HOW DOES THE PLAN AFFECT MY PROPERTY?

The buildings on James Street North vary considerably in age, style and condition. The plan has designated the building stock on the street into three categories (A, B and C) with accompanying policies.

"A" Buildings : These are the finest historic buildings in the district. They have architectural and historical value and contribute greatly to the special character of James Street North. Many are in good condition and many need repair.

The plan encourages the saving and restoration of the original building facade including the windows, wall fabric and decorative mouldings.

"B" Buildings : These are important buildings as they contribute to the integrity and continuity of the streetscape. They may not be great works of architecture but they are an important part of the whole.

The plan encourages their conservation. If changes are made, they should be compatible with the adjoining historic streetscape.

"C" Buildings : These buildings, while of merit in their own right, do not relate to the special character of the street. The plan encourages that, over time, the exterior facades be remodelled in keeping with the prevailing historic streetscape.

The selection of the A, B and C buildings is shown on the schedule B map of the plan.

WHAT DOES THE PLAN BASICALLY PROPOSE?

The plan basically proposes the following:

- The Community : to preserve the "village in the city" character of James Street North.
 - : to develop the district for living in as well as for shopping working and visiting
 - : to strengthen community pride and identity.
- The Economy : to develop and enhance the economy of the district.
 - : to promote investment in the area.
 - : to make the fullest and most profitable use of the building stock.
- The Buildings : to conserve and restore the historic building stock.
 - : to ensure new building blends in with the historic streetscape.
- Car Parking : to provide more continuous on and off street parking.
 - : to improve the signage and appearance of car parks.
- Traffic : to examine the return of 2-way traffic
 - : to reduce traffic speed and volume.
- Pedestrians : to enhance pedestrian comfort.
 - : to provide more crosswalks.
- Landscaping : to plant more trees.
 - : to landscape car parks and open spaces.
 - : to landscape the C.N.R. park.
 - : to create landscape "pockets" along James Street North (ex. in front of the Armory, Cathedral, Tivoli, etc.....)
- Lighting : to install new decorative lighting.
 - : to illuminate significant building facades (ex. Armory, C.N.R. Station, etc....)
- Signage : to improve the quality of signs.
 - : to discourage signs at the upper facades.
- Land Use : to develop James Street North as a place to live in as well as a place to shop and work in.

IS IT THE UPPER BUILDING FACADES THAT SHOULD BE CONSERVED?

Yes. Most of the visible history and beauty on James Street North is in the upper building facades. Many of these facades are of superb design and craftsmanship. The plan's conservation policies mainly refer therefore to these upper facades. The plan encourages the repair and upkeep of the original wall material, roofs, windows, decorative fascias brackets and mouldings.

WHAT ABOUT STOREFRONTS?

Many of the storefronts on James Street North are modern. Some original storefronts still remain. The plan encourages a liberal design approach to foster the owner's individuality and taste. A good blend of modern store front and historic upper facade is sought.

DOES THE PLAN PLACE RESTRICTIONS ON MY PROPERTY?

The plan provides a guideline for the development of James Street North and the review and approval of building permits. The guidelines encourage the conservation, repair and upkeep of the historic building facades and compatible new building. The guidelines provide room for choice and variety.

The plan stresses the importance now of considering James Street North as a whole and not as a collection of isolated buildings.

Review of a building permit will therefore consider the plan's guidelines for your property. Providing the building change protects, conserves and enhances the character of the district, no undue difficulties will arise. If the building change is blatantly contrary to the plan, changes may be requested or the permit delayed until a hearing is held.



WILL THE PLAN DELAY A BUILDING PERMIT?

No. The process for reviewing a building permit is not delayed by the plan. The only difference is that the application will now also be circulated to the local architectural conservation advisory committee for review and comment. Providing the application compliments the guidelines of the plan together with those of other jurisdictions (Ontario Building Code, Fire Marshall, Health Unit, etc.. .) no delay is encountered.

WHAT IF BUILDING CHANGES DO NOT COMPLIMENT THE PLAN?

If an application for a building permit is blatantly contrary to the plan, city hall will first meet with the applicant and try to resolve matters. Many times a meeting is all that is required. However, if a satisfactory resolution is not reached, city hall may issue a permit with conditions or refuse the permit. The applicant may then, within 30 days, appeal the decision to the Ontario Municipal Board. The O.M.B. may then dismiss the appeal or support the appeal and direct that the permit be issued.

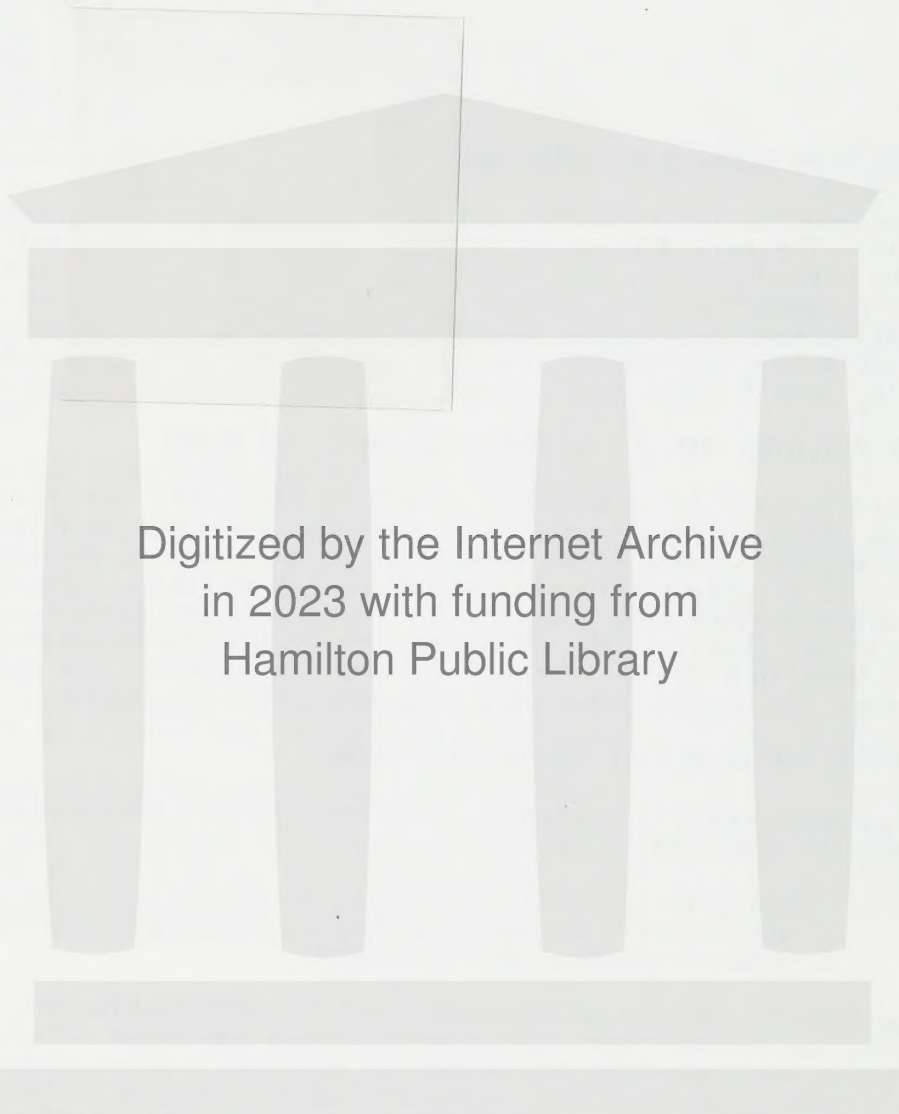
WHY SHOULD THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT THE PLAN?

The plan presents the community of James Street North with an unparalleled opportunity to:

- . conserve a superb historic streetscape
- . strengthen a community and its aspirations
- . enhance business and investment.

The opportunity of the plan should not be underestimated. It presents the first time when the district has been carefully researched, meetings with the community held and a plan prepared. It is a bold plan that has addressed many concerns raised by residents including car parking, landscaping, lights, traffic and the opportunity to restore and make better use of the building stock.

The plan has presented a co-ordinated approach for James Street North to become an attractive, successful and prosperous district.



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